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The last article, entitled "A Brief Bibliography of American Diplomacy," "is a convenient list of the more accessible books" in which one is a little surprised not to find mentioned the Secret Journals of the Continental Congress or the United Revised Statutes or Statutes at Large. Except for this chapter, the entire absence of footnotes or references of any kind to authorities will render the book of little value to students. The few errors of fact noted are, doubtless, due to Mr. Hart's broad generalizations and his eagerness to maintain his own interpretation of our history. It is, of course, clearly wrong to say Hawaii was acquired by treaty or that the territory of the Maine boundary dispute was "divided nearly on the line of the rejected" award of the King of the Netherlands.

GEORGE WINFIELD SCOTT.

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Primitive Semitic Religion To-day. By SAMUEL IVES CURTISS. Pp. 277. Price, \$2.00. Chicago: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1902.

Professor Curtiss' book is a collection of customs prevailing chiefly among Moslems, but to a certain extent also among Christians and Jews, illustrative of the survivals of ancient religious rites and of the beliefs on which the rites are based. The nineteen chapters of the book cover such a variety of topics as conceptions of God, local deities, sacred personages, high places, shrines, vows, festivals, sacrifices, and the use of blood, and Professor Curtiss is to be commended for the diligence displayed in gathering such interesting material during his three journeys through Syria and Palestine, 1898-1901. Not all of the material is new, for numerous other travelers have been struck by the same peculiar customs which aroused Professor Curtiss' attention, but his illustrations are far more numerous than are to be met with in other accounts of Palestinian travels and he has arranged his material in an orderly manner. The treatment of the material, however, leaves much to be desired. Despite the fact that the author, as he himself tells us, has been a Professor of Old Testament Literature in a western institution for twenty years, the thought does not appear to have occurred to him until he entered Palestine, that the centres of ancient culture necessarily show traces of the past in popular customs and that these traces persist, despite the most radical political and religious changes that a country undergoes. Apparently Professor Curtiss did not make the acquaintance of such investigators of religious rites as the late Robertson Smith, J. G. Frazer, H. C. Trumbull, F. B. Jevons—to mention only the most prominent names—until after he had been struck by the abundance of "survivals" in Syria and Palestine, and what is still more strange, the travels of Doughty and Burckhardt and the works of Clermont-Ganneau, Conder and others were likewise unknown to him until a short time ago. Otherwise, he could hardly have conceived the strange delusion which one encounters on the first page of this book, and to which the author constantly reverts that he has made "remarkable," "wonderful" and "startling" discoveries. The frequency with which these adjectives are strewn through the book constitutes its most serious defect,

and there is something very naïve in the manner in which the author, after announcing one of his "wonderful" discoveries, adds a quotation from Doughty or Clermont-Ganneau or Palmer, or a reference to Trumbull or Frazer, which shows that the "discovery" had been made by others long before. There is, in fact, not a single new point brought out in the book, the value of which consists wholly in the additional illustrations that Professor Curtiss has furnished of "survivals" covering a wide range of religious rites and customs that have been a commonplace of oriental archæology for the last twenty years. When, as occasionally happens, the author ventures beyond the mere gathering of material to the interpretation of it, he soon gets beyond his depth and reveals the crudity of his archæological attainments. So in the chapter on "Modern Semites" he enters upon generalizations about Semites which utterly fail to take into account the mixed character of the population of Syria and Palestine, and again, in treating of conceptions of God among the modern inhabitants of these countries, Professor Curtiss draws conclusions from a few isolated instances which are wide of the mark, while in the chapter on "The Moral Relation of Man to God" he endeavors to foist upon the modern Semites a conception of sin, that so far from being a characteristic of any particular race, is common to all people occupying a certain level of culture. It is evident from the manner in which the author quotes from the Koran that he has never read it in the original, and yet with a second-hand acquaintance of Islam he does not hesitate to pronounce a verdict, on one of the great religions of the world, that might have been excusable one hundred years ago, but is simply preposterous when uttered by a modern scholar.

Under these circumstances it is a pity that the author should not have confined himself to what he has shown himself so well capable of doing—collecting illustrations of "survivals." We must not close the notice without calling attention to the valuable appendix added by Dr. W. Hayes Ward on "Altars and Sacrifices in the Primitive Art of Babylonia" (pp. 266-277), which is a genuine contribution to the subject, of prime importance. Dr. Ward furnishes nineteen illustrations of sacrifices depicted on cylinders and other monuments of ancient Mesopotamia. His account of the various forms of altars, of the deities represented and of the kinds of sacrifices offered is most illuminative and induces one to express the hope that we may soon have a comprehensive work on the Babylonian cylinders from Dr. Ward, who for many years has made a special study of this important and interesting subject.

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Nominating Systems: Direct Primaries versus Conventions in the United States. By ERNST C. MEYER. Pp. 501. Price, \$1.50. Published by the Author. Madison, Wisconsin, 1902.

This volume is divided into four parts and thirty-six chapters. In Part I is traced the evolution of the caucus and convention system from its origin to the present stage of development. Part II deals with direct primary legis-